

result would have been the suppression of Wycliffism before it had taken root. But by excluding foreign jurisdiction over heresy, the English took their fate as a nation into their own hands. Though in the course of years we made many mistakes in the treatment of religious opinion, we have succeeded better by a vacillating course than if we had submitted ourselves to a merciless outside power whose policy of repression knew not change. With this one solid gain, Wycliffe's year of triumph ended.

During the Spanish campaign of 1367, conducted by the Black Prince on behalf of Pedro the Cruel, there had been serving among the English troops two knights named Shakell and Haule. These gentlemen had the good fortune to make prisoner a Spanish grandee named the Count of Denia. By the law of arms then recognised in camps of chivalry, the valuable prize belonged to the captors themselves and not to the King whom they served. The knights brought the Count home to England, but eventually allowed him to return to his country to raise his ransom, and took his little son in his stead as their guest and hostage. The redemption of prisoners of high rank was then a very important and expensive affair. A few years before, the English Government had paid away a tenth of the Parliamentary grant of taxes for the ransom of one man ;¹ the extortion of the money requisite to redeem the nobles captured at Poitiers had goaded the French peasantry to the terrible outbreaks of the Jacquerie. The Count appears to have found great difficulty in raising the money from his estates in Spain, for when ten years had passed his son still remained unredeemed in the hands of the English knights. At the time of Richard's accession to the throne, some negotiations were set on foot between this country and Castile, which made the possession of the hostage of great importance to the English diplomats. An embassy was invited to England to negotiate his redemption or exchange.² The government sent for the boy, but Shakell and Haule

¹ Sir Hugh de Chatillon, 4,500Z. See *Antiquary*, i. 159. ² *Feet**, iv. 15; *Cont. JSulog.*, 342 ; *De JEcc.*, vii. 142.